

Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Investment Strategies Committee

Final Meeting Summary

December 14, 1998

Present: Dale Stedman, Chair, R. Ted Bottiger, Don Briscoe, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, Peter Hurley, Bettie Ingham, John Kelly, Charles Mott, Patricia Otley, Doug Beighle (Steering Committee member)

Absent: Bill Lampson, Vice Chair, Jennifer Joly, Arthur D. Jackson, Jr., Representative Maryann Mitchell

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. The Chair reviewed minutes from previous meetings and asked for any proposed revisions. The minutes were corrected to reflect that John Kelly was present at the November 17 meeting. The Committee approved the minutes from the previous meetings as presented, with the exception of the changes to the Committee Charter noted below.

Charter Amendment

The Committee discussed a proposed change to Item 4 in its charter. The Committee Charter was amended to read:

Identify, evaluate, and recommend strategies that encourage more efficient use of transportation facilities as well as strategies that add new capacity.

Meeting Schedule for 1999

The Chair asked for proposed meeting times for the 1999 calendar year. Whenever possible, Committee members would like to keep the Committee meetings close to the Commission meetings, either the evening before or in the morning of the same day. The Committee agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of the month.

Transportation Briefings

In general, members felt that the morning's presentations were excellent and contained useful information. However, Committee members noted that the presentations contained much information on the existing system but few proposals on how to improve it.

Issues raised in the presentations that need further consideration include the following topics.

- **More constructive presentations.** Some Committee members felt that presenters were reluctant to criticize WSDOT or other agencies. Perhaps presenters could be asked, “If you could change three things, what would they be?” The Committee would like to hear from additional speakers with specific proposals for reform.
- **Simplify funding presentation.** Members discussed the difficulty of obtaining sufficient information in such a brief presentation and the need for more information on how WSDOT works. A follow-up meeting with Helga Morgenstern of WSDOT could focus on ideas for reform.
- **Linkages with other efforts.** Members discussed the need to coordinate with other ongoing planning and reform efforts. These include the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board, WSDOT’s Congestion Taskforce, WSDOT’s update of the State Transportation Plan, and the Washington Transportation Alliance.
- **Separate maintenance/preservation and capacity/congestion.** Members discussed the potential advantages in approaching these issues separately.
- **Do not overlook small-scale reforms.** Members discussed examples of small-scale improvements to existing facilities that improve the efficiency of traffic flow and are cost-effective.
- **Find and compare best practices.** The Commission’s time schedule for developing recommendations can make it difficult for members to become fully informed on all aspects of the transportation issue. Accordingly, members agreed on an approach that would focus on receiving specific policy recommendations in identified problem areas. The Committee is interested in learning about best practices in other states and engaging in a debate on what strategies could work in Washington.

Topic Selection

At its January 1999 meeting, the Committee plans to reach agreement on its work plan. The Committee will build on the work done at its October 1998 meeting and apply the information obtained in the November and December briefings. Topic areas for the work plan include:

- Congestion relief
- Preservation and maintenance of existing facilities
- Economic development
- Safety
- Closing the gap between identified “needs” and current resources

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.